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THE PEOPLE'S RIGHT IN WEALTH, REDUCED TO \$'S AND C^TS.

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THE PEOPLE'S RIGHT IN WEALTH,

REDUCED TO DOLLARS AND CENTS.

MODERN FREEDOM, hungry, ragged, and down at the heel, has got sick of herself. She has found that sovereignty without ownership is a fraud. The expropriated—the wretch divorced from capital, and to whom his country does not guarantee honest labor with fair returns for it—is a slave. Special black slavery has been abolished in America. General white slavery has taken its place. A thousand monopolies are our new masters; ten thousand politicians are their overseers; “we, the people,” are their gangs of bondmen. I purpose to point out a few of the monopolies which have reduced us to this latest form of slavery. I purpose, then, to show the way—the one best way—to break our bonds and right our wrongs.

It makes little difference just where we begin. Here are five monopolies that have kidnapped the Government of the United States, and are holding it to service as their chief clerk:

LAND MONOPOLY,
CURRENCY MONOPOLY,
TARIFF MONOPOLY,
TAXATION MONOPOLY,
TRANSPORTATION MONOPOLY.

Let us glance at the first—

LAND MONOPOLY.

Since the United States became a nation, the people have owned nine hundred millions of acres of available public land. Nominal settlers have had one-third of it. A hundred and sixty-one million acres have been turned over to the States. Sixty-seven millions have gone for bounties, waterways and highways. About a hundred millions are left unclaimed. The “railway kings” have “gobbled” the rest through corrupt legislation. While the people were giving half a million lives to save the nation, these “railway kings” appropriated, through their partners and footmen in Congress, twice as much of the people’s heritage as the whole territory of New England. While American soldiers were dying in corps to preserve eleven States to the Union, American monopolists were taking away from the soldiers’ orphans enough territory for twelve new States. These soldiers’ orphans are now the tenant-farmers of those robbers’ heirs and assigns; and the United States contains a quarter of a million more of such tenant farmers than “poor old Ireland.” In fact, we have as much ground as the whole of Ireland in the hands of twenty-nine alien, absentee landlords. So much for land monopoly.*

Now look at the

CURRENCY MONOPOLY.

A few years ago a new party sprang up among us, called the “Greenback Party.” It never amounted to much, in the sense of electing constables, presidents, and such things. It was simply a protest against one of the most gigantic swindles of the modern world. By that swindle, the money-monopolists of America and Europe—what Thaddeus Stevens called the “bullion mongers”—cheated the people of the United States out of five thousand millions of dollars in the twenty years following 1861. This monopoly was procured by controlling the Senate, and seducing that body into framing the legal tender act of a great nation in the small, single interest of a Wall-Street coin-pot. The Coin-Pot used the Senate to create government notes convertible at their face

* An excellent statistical summary of “America’s Land Question” can be found in the “North American Review” for February, 1886, in an article by A. J. Desmond.

in soldiers' blood and bones, but expressly inconvertible at the same value in the percentages of Shylock—the interest on the public debt. It was done against an overwhelming majority of the ablest and most honest House of Representatives that ever sat in Washington. Stevens, “the great commoner,” cried over it like a child. Spaulding—then Chairman of the sub-Committee of Ways and Means, since President of the National Banking Association—exposed the plot, and said it would “double the national debt.” It did not—quite. In 1865 the debt stood at twenty-eight hundred and eight millions. A thousand millions of it was sheer inflation—water injected by the coin-pot conspiracy. The rest was a tolerably honest obligation. But the thousand millions has since been eating interest, and the inflation soon led to Hugh McCulloch and his murderous contraction—another deal in the sole interest of the coin-pot—by which he wrecked all commercial values, until at last Congress interfered, and choked off the fiscal traitor to his country. The blood-money of the currency-thugs, reckoning for a quarter of a century, has been estimated, by careful authorities, as high as seven billions of dollars, or an amount equal to about one-eighth of the entire capital of the country to-day. Other estimates have been lower, and some higher. But a billion or two is of no consequence where the robbery has been so nearly incalculable.

THE TARIFF MONOPOLY,

in its fundamental character, is a confidence-game, played against the poor, that the rich may avoid direct taxation. Our fathers—a few of whom were great men—instituted “a tariff for revenue.” They knew it was unjust, but they did it as they instituted slavery, because they had to compromise with greed and littleness. Then came the pressure to “encourage infant industries”—which had already started without encouragement. The brassy giant “protection,” followed the babe “encouragement.” Now we have a tariff so utterly rotten that the surplus has become a dead white elephant, and party scavengers wonder how they can cart it away.*

There is no mystery about a tariff. The trade of a nation is like the trade of a peanut-stand. To get all the wealth you can, for what wealth you give, is the business of both. But to give all the corn and cotton we can hand out, for as little to eat and wear as we can take in, is American “business,” under the tariff. Buy dear and sell cheap: so you shall have prosperity! In the interest of the tariff monopolists, we now subsidize one-twentieth of our industries at the expense of nineteen-twentieths; shout “protection for the workingman,” deducting the cost of the noise from his wages; then cut the wages down—first, directly in cash; next, indirectly by competition, in fostering, with all our might, the immigration of Huns, second-hand Romans, and cheap anarchists, from all the sinks of the earth. If this handcuffing of commerce, and general inversion of values, involves a loss of only ten dollars a year to each person in the country, the annual sum is five hundred and fifty millions.

The tariff is corrupt taxation behind the door. The direct, uncovered

TAXATION MONOPOLY

is next in order. In 1850 the wealth of the United States was a little more than seven billions of dollars. It was assessed for a little more than six billions, or six-sevenths of the whole value. In 1880 the country's assets had reached about forty-four billions. The assessment was for about seventeen billions, or somewhat more than one-third of the value. Why the change? It was to relieve “personal property,” and thus spare the rich from paying their proper share of public obligations, which they put on the comparatively poor, for the most part small farmers and householders. The special legislation of the past twenty years, exempting bondholders from taxation, and abetting the concealment of personal property, has enabled the very rich to shirk about nine-tenths of their legitimate tax-burdens.†

Our fifth national confidence game, the

TRANSPORTATION MONOPOLY,

is better understood than the other four. The people have been brought into closer contact with it. Not long since the Harpers published a rather remarkable book, entitled “The Railways and the Republic,” written by Mr. J. F. Hudson. The gentleman puts a peculiar conundrum to “intelligent Americans.” He wants to know whether the Republic is going to rule the railways, or the

* A surplus from *honest* taxation, however, is just the right thing, and the reader of this monograph will ascertain what ought to be done with it.

† “The greatest evasion of tax-paying is among the richest men—men worth ten, twenty, fifty, or a hundred millions, who, by a just public policy, should carry taxation at a quadruple rate. Sometimes these men do not pay taxes on a tenth part of their property.”—Hon. W. A. Phillips, in “Labor, Land, and Law.” Scribner's Sons.

railways are going to rule the Republic. For the time being, the answer is easy. The railways *do* rule the Republic.*

How wonderfully these steam turnpikes have developed our resources ! Their great managers have even "made something out of nothing ;" for they have saddled on us a fictitious debt of four thousand millions of dollars.† A double interest, one half illegitimate, on this "capital," our railway bond-masters are whipping out of the toiler's sweat and the merchant's alacrity.

The five United States national monopolies that I have now designated are interlinked, of course, with corporate and individual monopolies in endless variety. Take two or three samples.

By a vast combination between the Transportation Monopoly and the leading

COAL-BED MONOPOLISTS,

competition in supplying the people's fuel—their anthracite and bituminous coal—has been extinguished, and extortion has been reduced to an exact science. Every ton of coal that now reaches a consumer could be furnished at two-thirds the usual price, with fair pay to the wretched miners, and a handsome profit to the owners and carriers. The extra percentage is piratical spoil, not business compensation. The coal-pool buccaneers levy a yearly tribute of about forty millions of dollars upon a patient, ox-eyed people, who really own the coal, and grant the charters, of the "kings" and "barons" who ride and rob them.‡

THE NOTORIOUS STANDARD OIL COMPANY

is another abomination of the same sort. Its record has been summed up as "the history of a commercial crime."§ Its "business" has been simply a conspiracy against the poor, to keep cheap light away from their dark and desolate homes. As Mr. Hudson says, "Its vast wealth has been accumulated in less than fifteen years, by speculative manipulations, by bribing legislators, and by distorting law to deny to one man the privileges given to another." This conspiracy began in a deal between the Standard "bosses" and the "kings" of the Pennsylvania, Erie, and New York Central railroads. The purpose was to kill competition, by cornering the whole product of the American people's natural oil, and then charging us double price for it. The deal has been a monstrous success, and there is hardly a crime on the calendar, from murder and arson down to malicious mischief, that has not been perpetrated in carrying out the plan. But the Standard Oil Company, nevertheless, has piled up its hundred million dollars ; the railroad pool as much more, probably ; while the penalty for fleecing the people, in such ways, is a chair for the oil-man, Mr. Whitney, in President Cleveland's Cabinet, and a bench for the railroad-man, Mr. Stanley Matthews, in the Supreme Court. How wisely we are encouraged to respect our government and our laws !

A bare index of monopolies, about as bad, if not quite so glaring, as the coal and oil conspiracies, would be too long and exasperating for human patience. The

GAS COMPANIES

of the country have as much to answer for, in proportion to size and ability, as the Standard Oil Company. But nearly our whole material substance has been monopolized and "cornered." As with currency, coal, and petroleum, so with wheat, beef, corn, pork, and the rest. Individual and corporate vampires have fastened themselves upon all the great products and commodities of the country, and these are only permitted to reach the people after Robin Hood, Jack Shepard and Dick Turpin have extracted such highwaymen's tolls from them as our excessive innocence and piety enable us to bear without universal insurrection.

Our revolutionary father, old John Adams, said : "Those who own the land will rule the country." He made no exception of his own country, under democratic institutions. And he knew what he was talking about, though he stated only a small part of the case. Slavery always rests on monopoly of ownership. Turn the earth over to one man, and all the rest of mankind would be his dependents—vassals of his will, beggars for his crumbs, if only the poor crumb of a little hard work for low wages. This dependence, this beggary, is simply the latest and most popular condition of human bondage. No one man has yet squatted on the whole United States, and fenced the

* The Inter-State Commerce Act shows some spirit of rebellion against them, and appears to be better than nothing, as a tendency at least.

† This amount is taken from the figures of B. F. Thurber and the Anti-Monopoly League. Mr. Hudson's book places the sum a little lower, and the author of "Labor, Land and Law" puts it higher.

‡ According to the report of the committee of the New York Legislature in 1878, it would seem that this statement is very close to the fact. Mr. Hudson appears to sanction an estimate of thirty-one millions. If the gentle reader is not satisfied with either figure, he may "split the difference."

§ The Railways and the Republic ; page 67.

country in as his private property ; but a few men have monopolized pretty nearly all our natural wealth, our natural opportunities, and the capital resulting from both.

ANCIENT SLAVERY

conquered men in battle, and then held them to service with chains and whips ; but it guaranteed them a *living*, if only in the interest of the master.

MODERN SLAVERY—

the white American slavery of to-day—has conquered the people by taking away their power to earn their bread, and holds them to service by a general combination of great hucksters, commodities at law called attorneys, and the dirtiest breed of politicians that ever tried to put on the airs of “statesmen.”

We are tired of our servitude. Some of us understand it thoroughly, and we mean that all shall understand it soon. There is no further use of trying to deceive us through political windbags and journalistic weather-cocks. And when some literary shyster of the great monopolies—some Edward Atkinson—would have us mouse around swill-barrels and ash-heaps, to live on what the ignorant rich throw away, we consider him and his figures an insult added to injury. We have seen “the signs of the times,” and feel what is coming. It is economic freedom, economic justice. There are two means to that end. One is amelioration for the masses—*instant*—beginning now ; the other is revolution, not long to be postponed.

But present civilization, bad as it is, embodies the best hope, the truest knowledge, if not the happiest condition, that humanity has reached. What we have gained is worth saving, especially what we have gained in our American Republic. We cannot afford to plunge into wreck and chaos, if we can help it. And there is not the slightest need of the plunge, if—well, if we have brains enough to see and do the right thing.

To begin with, here is the question to be settled—the bottom of it. What is the

BASIC PRINCIPLE OF OWNERSHIP,

“the higher law of property ?” What is the natural and necessary right of individuals in wealth ; and what is the natural and necessary right of the people—all mankind—in their general heritage of material things ? As strange as the claim may appear until proved, I shall show that this problem has been solved.

THE DEEPEST truth of political economy is the oldest. When the great Greek,

ARISTOTLE,

founded and named the science, he saw, at the first glance of analysis, that all property rests on *natural wealth*—that natural wealth is the source and raw material of all human productions and possessions. In designating such wealth, he summed it up as

“THE BOUNTY OF NATURE.”

What Aristotle, the first political economist, called “the bounty of nature,” Henry George, the best known of the latest political economists, calls “land.”

Now the bounty of nature—the earth, the water, the air—was not made by any man or stock company. God* made it; and made it as the only means of sustaining his creatures made with it. So, necessarily and self-evidently, those creatures have a natural right in that gift. Or, as Jefferson said, “the earth belongs in usufruct to the living.”

I am aware that, in this smart age, everything is denied by somebody.

NATURAL RIGHTS ARE DENIED

—even the right to life. But life is here, all the same, and nature gives it. Has the receiver no right to the gift ? If he has the right, it comes from nature *with* the gift—is a *natural* right. Mankind have feet. They were made to walk on. Hence, men and women have a natural right to walk on their feet, not on their ears. If society—the State, the government—should cut off our feet, and try to make us walk on our ears, that would be a violation of a natural right—the right to walk as we are constructed to walk. There is all there is of a natural right—the right to act in accordance with a natural fact, a natural law. The business of the State, therefore, is simply to recognize and maintain natural rights. But when some new sage tells us there is no such thing,

*The *theological* designation of the Absolute—of “That Which Is”—still comes to the point in the shortest and best way.

let us waste no time on him. Let us stop talking and go to the show. The gentleman's feet are in the air. He is walking on his ears.

No: the great doctrine of natural rights—the one doctrine which fairly comprises our American history—is not dead yet, but has just begun to live; and the one natural right at the base of all other natural rights is the right of human beings to their environment. This environment, made with them, provided for them, is the common state, and so *es-tate*, of matter. Thus, not by act of Congress or Parliament, but by direct act of the universe itself, in its very physical as well as moral constitution,

NATURAL WEALTH IS COMMON WEALTH.

In his matchless book, "Progress and Poverty," Henry George has illustrated and elaborated this natural relation of man to matter—this bottom fact of political economy—from every aspect. I agree fully with Mr. George, with Mill, Spencer, and the rest of those distinguished thinkers, in their result. And here let *me* deny a bit. I deny it is merely a "theory." It is a *discovery*, a *law*—as much so as the law of gravitation. It is the first section of the

HIGHER LAW OF PROPERTY.

In one sense, however, and a very practical one, there is no dissent from it. There is no theory, no form of government, not basing its reason for existence on the claim of standing for the best common interests of the people governed. And there is no theory, no system of political economy, not basing the tenures to property—the laws, the practical ethics of the matter—on the same foundation, the best common interests of the people composing a state, a nation, an epoch. England distinctly asserts, at the present moment, through her most commonplace and conservative authorities, that her whole wealth belongs to her whole people; hence her right to call on every subject to defend it. She merely adds that the methods she sanctions and enforces for the distribution of wealth are the best she knows for the general welfare. We find all that, now-a-days, filtered down into so ordinary a place as the *Cyclopædia Britannica*.^{*} But is not this conclusion precisely the same thing as saying that the people of the world jointly own the world, and that the people of any country jointly own that country, while they utilize and maintain it. We come right back to the primary cognition that the right to live implies the right to own.

THIS BASIC PRINCIPLE OF OWNERSHIP,

too, is all in our American Declaration of Independence—and is there in the very best way—as we are forced to see the moment that document is completely analyzed.

Our fathers declared that all men are "created equal," and are "endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, among which are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." But, as human life is absolutely dependent on its environment, and, as there can be no liberty, except to die, when this access is cut off, the pursuit of happiness must necessarily include that use and enjoyment of things implied in the word "ownership." Hence "life, liberty," and

PROPERTY

are the "equal rights of man," according to the full import of Thomas Jefferson. But what is

EQUALITY? †

When Jefferson declared, as the voice of the modern world, that "all men are created equal," it was not with the meaning that every man and woman can lift just five hundred pounds—the interpretation put on us by the dyspeptic stomach of Carlyle, and the "innocuous desuetude" of the poet Tennyson. Washington and Franklin, Jefferson and Paine, were too busy to split hairs with sophists and pettifoggers. All men stand "equal" in the "natural rights" of "life and liberty," but no two men are precisely equal in the capacity to improve and enjoy those endowments. *That is*

THE AMERICAN TENET,

as every intelligent American understands it.

Now precisely the same thing is true of man's natural relation to property. All men are "equal" in the "natural right" of access to the world's wealth—the original bounty of nature, and the improvements that mankind as a whole have made upon their inalienable, indefeasible reality. But individual men can employ and improve that wealth only in accordance with indi-

^{*} See, for instance, the article on "Land."

[†] Archbishop Corrigan, of New York, somewhat recently, and altogether pertinently, sought the answer to this question in his fulmination against the teachings of Henry George. If his Grace desires the complete analysis of equality, in reference to political economy and the institutions of the United States, I must be pardoned for presenting him with that slight token of my esteem, right here.

vidual capacity. In the *distribution* of wealth, therefore, under the natural relation of man to matter, all men are *not* unqualifiedly entitled to an *equal share* in property, but to an *equitable share*; and an equitable share is an equal share, *according to ability, industry, and economy*. There is

THE HIGHER LAW OF PROPERTY

in full.

Theoretically, even now, it is pretty well recognized. We have seen how it lies implicitly in our Declaration of Independence. "Scientific socialism," so called, re-declares it, in demanding all capital for the commonwealth, and then "returns according to deeds" for individuals. Communism—or common wealth and distribution according to "needs"—comes indirectly to the same thing; for the one need of needs in developing this earth is the property-tools to do it; and it cannot be done unless these tools go with the capacity to use them.

On the other hand, I am happy to see that our hardest-headed business men have set up the higher law of property as their special creed. In a controversy, some three years ago, with Mr. John Swinton

HON. CHAUNCEY M. DEPEW,

as the exponent of Vanderbilt, took for his fundamental postulate the assertion that all men should be started in life with an equal chance for the accumulation of wealth, and should then be permitted to enjoy the fruits of different abilities and labors unquestioned and unmolested. Again, that eminent stock-philosopher,

MR. JAY GOULD,

has expressed the same sentiment. He did so, for instance, very emphatically, in the spring of '86, while laying down the requirements of integrity, honor and justice, to

MR. POWDERLY, OF THE KNIGHTS OF LABOR.

So the Constitutional fathers, the social philosophers, the dreamers, the "cranks," the financiers, and possibly some of the rascals, stand behind me for authority. It is hard for any of them not to accept what is simply the Golden Rule carried into economics. But none of these gentlemen know, practically, what to do with it. Besides, some of the best of them, in their way—like Mr. Depew—entertain the great truth very superficially, and don't really wish to mean too much of what they say. And they have no conception that what they urge, in a general way, as a handy bit of economic piety, speciously advanced by the rich in self-defense, has been thought out into a complete and connected system.

So far I have stated

THE LOGOS OF OWNERSHIP

only as ethics. But nothing is more simple and easy than to convert it into mathematics—after seeing how.

The pivot on which this transformation turns is fixed, too, in nature. It is the fact of death.

Fortunately, men cannot take this world with them into the next. When they lie down in the grave, their stocks and bonds, their money and mortgages, go to other persons. The entire wealth of mankind reverts from one generation to another

EVERY FIFTY YEARS,

or according to the average death-rate.*

It was not one of "the mistakes of Moses" to institute his "jubilee," with the general re-distribution of Hebrew land, on the basis of half a century. That grand squaring of accounts,† and redivision, for each generation, of what was then the great part of all wealth, shows that the duration of human life was about the same, four thousand years ago, as we find it on our tables of mortality to-day. By their "jubilee," the children of Israel attempted to equalize natural wealth among all the people, but to leave the products of labor in the hands that sowed and reaped them. What

* "The average death-rate in thirty-three cities of the United States, in the year 1879, was $20\frac{11}{100}$ in one thousand; and, in the year 1880, it was $22\frac{23}{100}$, or a little over two per cent."—*Ownership and Sovereignty*.

According to the latest vital statistics of Europe and America, compiled by Dr. J. H. Billings, the present death-rate in the United States is 18 to the thousand, annually. In

England and Wales.....	20.5
Sweden.....	18.1
Belgium.....	22.4
German Empire.....	26.1
Austria.....	29.6

† Leviticus, xxv., 23-34.

an ancient, barbarous people did by the rule of thumb, a modern, civilized people can do by the rule of three.

It is a fact, then, and a fact that becomes self-evident as soon as considered, that the world's wealth, or a nation's wealth, is simply

A REVERSION,

extending substantially through fifty years. But, if the whole wealth of every generation is constantly reverting to the next, on the average of fifty years, just one-fiftieth of all wealth is constantly reverting in one year. This one-fiftieth is

TWO PER CENT.

Is it not perfectly clear, therefore, that an annual tax of two per cent. on the *full value of all property*, collected by society, and expended for the common good of society, would effect complete

DEMOCRACY OF OWNERSHIP?—

would give, with each and every year, to each and every child born under the system, an equal share in all the opportunities and advantages of life?

This equation has been denied, so far as I know to date, by just one man in America—not a mathematician, but an editor. I am looking to him now for the total destruction of arithmetic.

Mr. David Reeves Smith, who appears to have first stated the basic law of ownership in its exact and complete proportions, and to have wrought out the true method of applying it,* has termed this application

“THE DEATH-RATE TAX;”

and the revenue from it he has termed

“NATURAL RENT.”

It is a perpetual ground-rent on all assets, due the whole people as a common fund, for the proportional use, by individuals, of the general heritage. By this birthright, death-rate tax, modern society can accomplish, mathematically and definitely, what all ancient nations accomplished approximately, by periodical re-division of their general capital, land—as in Judea; or by government holding of such capital, with no individual tenures—as in Egypt.† For such were the two property forms of primeval civilization. “Natural Rent” expresses, annually, constantly and perpetually, the exact common right of all society in all property. It would equalize, instantly, constantly and forever, not human wealth, but the natural opportunities to procure it; instantly, constantly and forever leaving, after that, every individual to work out his own pecuniary condition according to his own will and power.

BUT

WHAT IS TO BE DONE

with the

COMMON FUND?

How is it to be expended or redistributed for the common good?

Its being a *common* fund implies and settles, at the start, that it is not to be directly and equally lumped out to individuals, that idlers and spendthrifts may squander it. It belongs to no one in that way. The first legitimate use of any common public fund is to pay government expenses. The next use of it is to secure common advantages for the whole people. Suppose the property of the United States to-day is

50 BILLIONS OF DOLLARS.

Then the people, as a whole, are entitled this year to just

1,000 MILLIONS OF IT.

This is the amount of their birthright, death-rate tax. Figuring, in round numbers, the expenses of government, national, state and municipal—“stealings” not included—may be set down at 500 millions, or about one per cent. of the principal. All government expenses paid, the people, therefore, at this hour, are entitled to the remaining one per cent—

500 MILLIONS OF DOLLARS—

for redistribution. This redistribution would necessarily take the form, direct or indirect, of furnishing employment to citizens without capital, at the highest market rates, as an equivalent for

* In his *Ownership and Sovereignty: An Outline of the True Republic*. Clark & Foster: Cohoes, N. Y.

† An excellent, accessible, American book, full of facts in the direction here summarized, has been published during the past year by Scribner's Sons, under the title of *Labor, Land and Law*. I have several times referred to it. The author, Hon. Wm. A. Phillips—a well-known writer, and for several terms a prominent member of Congress—appears to have devoted the best part of his life to this work.

the *just monopoly* of their direct equal birthright in the capital of their generation. For property will always have to go out into private hands *unequally*, that those best able to increase its value—for the community as well as for themselves—can take as much as they can make the most of. But the distribution of the death-rate tax, in wages for work, will constantly restore the equilibrium. And it will make no difference what kind of work is done by those employed, so it pays for itself in the production of new and actual wealth, and unloads the dice now played in the “skin game,” called competition! While society's common capital is monopolized by the few, with no offset for the many, there is no such thing as *actual* competition. The word is a lie.

It is, of course, the *principle* of redistribution, and the *direct logical application* of it, that is here stated, rather than any fixed, invariable method. In constantly turning over to the people their birthright share in wealth, it would not be necessary for the government, as a government, to employ a single man otherwise than at present, unless it were best to do so in the interest of freedom as well as economics. For instance, one of the greatest needs of the American people to-day is to live in comfortable homes. Suppose the people's fund, above government expenses, should be expended for the next five years in premiums to capitalists, for building a certain style of house best adapted to the wants of the average family. The multiplication of such houses all over the land would in itself alone employ all the floating labor of the period, at the same time making homes plenty, hence cheap and easily rented or purchased at their proper value. If two or three billions of dollars were thus applied, there would be no further need of talking about an “unearned increment” in rent. But there are hundreds of ways in which the distribution could take place without the least tendency to injure political democracy, or to erect any system of socialism. There is no trouble about that, except in the heads, or rather the pockets, of our new slaveholders. Besides, the people would have to decide, by their vote, how their birthright-fund should be used for them.

But the indirect result of the death-rate tax would probably be greater than even the direct result. How many millions of dollars—how many hundreds of millions—now lie in the safety-vaults of New York and Boston, loafing at an interest of two to four per cent., because it is safer for money to loaf than to be out at work. Put an annual tax of two per cent. on these loafing hoards, and see how nimble they would become, in order to save themselves! They would rush out into the hands of enterprise and labor like the other sort of loafer to a free tap. They would weep and wail for active investment. Never again would work, the sire of wealth, stand, hat in hand, begging a job of his own offspring. The two would be partners—would have to be. The more one could do for the other, the more each would do for himself.

UNIVERSAL CO-OPERATION

would be established at one bound.

MY CLAIM for the higher law of property is now evident, I presume, in its full scope. It gives a centre, a head, to the scattered filaments of political economy, and elevates it to a humane and coherent science. The law establishes the most definite of results. It points out exactly, in dollars and cents, to the people of any country, their natural, God-given right and share in the wealth of that country, at any time and at all times, with the way to get it; and this, too, without disrupting society, or even disturbing its time-honored tenures to property. To my mind, such a law is worthy the sword of Mohammed, if need be, yet is really conservative, and only formulates for actual practice the moral basis on which all nations rest their polity and their right to govern.

In an age when the human mind prides itself on being a scatter-brain organ, squatting everywhere on a multitude of particulars, and then crawling to their focus by “induction”—when this game of snail-tag is alone recognized as “science”—it is almost impossible for the average thinking creature—as man still is in a way—to hold himself together long enough to receive an impress from any great general principle. The basic law of ownership simply photographs to thought a universal relation between man and matter. It is therefore precisely as actual as man and matter themselves, or as space and time, though even the so-called “scientific” may easily mistake it for a personal whim.*

Moreover, 'tis the logical and mathematical end of Aristotle, of the Gracchi, of Quesnay, of Herbert Spencer, of Henry George. Its origin reaches back thousands of years, and one view of it got

* A while ago I had the honor of reading the first hasty draft of this paper before “The Institute of Social Science,” in New York City, the learned and distinguished Mr. Park Godwin presiding. In a humorous and genial way, he was inclined to class the higher law of property among “nostrums.” But presently he trotted out a nostrum of his own—graduated taxation, or rather appropriation, of legacies—just about big enough to make a mouth for my bottle. So I lost no faith in Smith's economic elixir.

nearly seventy thousand votes, the other day, in the keen, commercial metropolis of the United States. For, as I have already stated and demonstrated, I stand on precisely the same *principle*, the same *premise*, as my friend, Henry George, though I am forced to a different *conclusion*.

When Mr. George says "land," he explains that he means natural wealth, the bounty of nature, or, to use his own words, "all natural forces and opportunities," the "whole material universe outside of man himself." And he holds that this "land" is common property, to which every human being has an equal right. He does not define equality, but he maintains that human beings are entitled to the results of their labor in accordance with what they do—that these results of labor are strictly private property.

All this is certainly true—even self-evidently true. But the difficulty with Mr. George is that his method and end are not the logical deduction from his beginning. His finality is a land tax, bearing all public burdens. But he would not tax land as he defines land. If "land" is natural wealth—the bounty of nature—the whole material universe outside of man himself—then Mr. George's land tax, which is only a ground tax, a mine tax, and the like, is not a land tax at all. For his "land"—natural wealth—is not merely to be found in farms and building sites, but has gone into houses and ships, and *everything else*, as the *raw material out of which they are made*. Yet all this "land," all this natural wealth, all this raw material worked up in the products of labor, Mr. George would exempt from taxation. He would not tax a lump of gold, because labor has picked it up and washed it. He would tax the hole out of which it was dug.*

But to make sure that we do no injustice to so great and true a man as Mr. George, let us take his own illustration—his favorite one. He would not tax a house; he would tax the plot under it. Why?

Well, land is given to all men equally, and the usufruct or rent of it should be used for their common benefit. This is the main reason. But he comes to the same point from another very significant view. The piece of ground had no value at the start—say, when the country was new, and land could be had for the asking. The first occupant put labor on it, and gave it utility—made it supply his wants. But even then the land itself had no *value*, as long as the next acres had no claimant. The land got its value, therefore—like the Astor lands of our American Gotham—by the general coming of society around it, creating an "unearned increment."

True. But the *house also* got its value in *precisely the same way*. What value would attach to that, without this same presence of population—this same influx of society in general? While a house stands alone, and there is no demand for it except in the uses of its occupant, it has no more value than the land under it. But as soon as other houses are built up around it, then every brick in the first—yes, and every stroke of labor that went to make the brick or to put it in place—gathers an "unearned increment." Strictly speaking, there is *no such thing as value* without society. Value is never intrinsic and independent, but always presupposes society, if only two persons—one who has something the other wants. Or, in the familiar terms of business as well as political economy, "the value of anything depends on supply and demand." If we are to insist, therefore, in Mr. George's way, on the common right to unearned increments, then a house, or the very coat on one's back, is common property, by the same principle as a piece of ground.

But we have seen that, according to Mr. George's definition of land as "nature's bounty," a house, or any other structure of human handiwork, is *land itself*, as far as original materials are concerned. These have all been taken off the earth or out of it. They are component parts of land, improved by labor. Whether timber, stone or iron, all of them are "land" in their basic quality of natural wealth as the common gift to mankind.

A tree, wild in the forest, is certainly a piece of God's land-bounty—the trunk as much as the roots or the soil around them. But when the tree has been hewn by labor and has become the log of a cabin, has the bounty of nature all gone out of it because a man has cut it down and fashioned it over? If there was the right of common property in the tree, is there not still some common right of property in the log? How does the common interest all depart from the tree now that labor has appropriated it to individual use? Can the bounty of nature be thus purloined, the moment it is improved, merely because *labor* does the purloining? Henry George's land-tax says it can.

BUT LET US SEE.

When the house-builder has cut down the tree, suppose he has left the stump. Then the

* It may be said (by some innocent lawyer, perhaps) that a great many words have more than one definition, and hence Mr. George need not adhere to his general definition of land when he comes to the special doctrine of his land tax. But such a plea would be mere sophistry; for the only right and reason on which Mr. George rests his sole land tax is that land is *nature's common gift to all mankind*. But if he taxes land as nature's gift, he must certainly tax the whole gift, not a part of it, if he is to assert the people's right in it, and if he is to be logical. The truth is, that Mr. George's use of the word "land" is utterly unscientific, exceptional, and misleading. "Land" does not properly mean "nature's bounty" or "natural wealth." The word is not big enough to cover the *thing*. Mr. George uses it as a bright soap-bubble. He blows it up, for generalization, to the full scope of Aristotle's grand phrase; then deflates it for taxation to its natural size. After a while a bubble so blown must burst.

farmer comes along. He digs out the stump, and improves the ground by making a useful excavation in it—for a cellar, perhaps. Now what better right has the house-builder to the tree he has cut than the farmer to the land he has excavated? Both the log and the cellar are the

IMPROVED BOUNTY OF NATURE

—the two ends of it. If so, both ends should be taxed, and for exactly the people's common right in them.

In 1882, according to the tables of Mulhall, the property of the United States stood in

Land.....	\$10,750,000,000
Houses.....	13,900,000,000
Railways.....	5,450,000,000
Cattle.....	1,890,000,000
Sundries.....	9,205,000,000
Total.....	\$41,195,000,000

So our land value in this country is not much more than one-quarter of all values. Yet Mr. George would make this one-quarter of wealth bear all the public burdens of the other three-quarters, in addition to its own. Every practical business man knows instinctively that such a tax *must be wrong*, though he may not be able to touch bottom in his objections. The fact is, it would be a huge monopoly of the manufacturer and wage-worker against the farmer.

STILL WORSE,

it would not take out of individual riches, largely heaped up in mammoth accumulations of personal property, anything like the people's share in them.

No: society has a common interest, not only in the ground, but in all property whatever—for the reason that all property is either the *raw bounty of nature* or that *same bounty of nature modified by labor*. Individual labor can get no title to common property by merely taking it and improving it.

MOREOVER,

If natural wealth is the common wealth of all mankind, it belongs, not to one generation but to all generations. The *unborn* have their *equal rights reserved in it*. Hence the common title is *inalienable and indefeasible*. No part of the general heritage can rightfully be turned over to individuals *except while they live*. Thus

THE WORLD'S WEALTH IS THE COMMON CAPITAL OF EVERY GENERATION.

But, on the other hand, it is just as clear that society has no right to take individual improvements—the products of any man's labor—without paying the full value for them. And there is *no need of taking them at all*, if the people's constant right in wealth—their usufruct, or rent—is annually deducted from all distributed property. In that case, both the common capital and the individual improvements on it can remain with the holders, and their property will be nothing more nor less than *the true compensation for their work on it*.

THIS INEVITABLE SEQUENCE

from man's common right to nature's bounty is of such striking importance that I must be pardoned for repeating the argument in the form of an almost kindergarten illustration.

Society, the United States, say

MRS. COLUMBIA,

says to Mr. Toilson: "Here is my farm—my lands, forests, mines and water-powers—my whole people's natural wealth. Take a piece of it—any kind you like—as big as you, with your special tastes and talents, can make the most of; for that is the end, they say, of property—to be worked up to the best advantage.

"Now I expect you to have your living, according to the general right of all my sons and daughters, out of that segment of my common stock and your work on it. You may have just as good a living as justice to you and to me permits. Consume what is fair. Go to Paris and London, if you can brighten your brains in that way, and be of better service to your pursuits. Build just as good a house as your special organism requires for the best results to both of us. I let you have your slice of my estate for that purpose. But you take it, you know,

TO USE FOR LIFE

I can't sell it to you, out and out; for I find that the structure of the universe makes such a dicker unconstitutional. So I lease you an outfit, and when you get through with it and 'go over

to the summer-land,' I will take my pay in the improvements you leave on the original realty. In some way, it appears, I must distribute all such values, hereafter, among my people—every generation of them—in order to give my citizens an equal start in life. That is the trend of democracy, as things look now. I suppose it will have to go through, in spite of Bismarck, and Ouida, and His Honor the Mayor of New York."

"Yes, Mrs. Columbia," replies Mr. Toilson, "it will have to go through, as sure as you live. But let us consider your

BUSINESS PROPOSITION.

"It is perfectly fair, provided I should always be honest and faithful. But don't you think you leave me too much discretion in my expenditures—my consumption? Then why should your other citizens wait till I am dead *before I pay back anything*? Let me take my piece of your common capital, and go to work on it. I shall want it fifty years—that is, for my life-time. But next year, at this date, let me drop around and hand you currency for one-fiftieth of what I am then worth. Let me do the same thing every year. Then, at the end of the fifty years, instead of taking away my land and improvements—my capital and additions—which will be paid for in full—let the holding, as it stands, go to my boys and girls, *under the same condition I had it*.

"You perceive, Mrs. Columbia, that the whole average value of my estate—all the property I can ever hold—will revert to you, for equal distribution, just the same as though you should revoke all wills and appropriate all legacies. The only difference will be that you will give my heirs the benefit that may arise, not from any monopoly of *your capital* but from any possible superiority (beyond the average) of *my labor*; while I, at the same time, shall be apt to be much more economical than in other circumstances. If I don't really need to go to Paris and London, or to live in a palace, you will not be charged with such pretty perquisites."

MRS. COLUMBIA, OF COURSE,

has the "last word" in this dialogue:

"Friend Toilson, I think I see the point. You would utterly abolish all my present hop-skip-and-jump assessors, from one end of the land to the other, with their one-third valuations and the like, and their taxes on a *part* of property. You would have one tax, and only one—a strictly *ad valorem* tax on all assets, in accordance with the average death-rate. That would be the *regular charge* against *every body*, for holding and using the common capital, and the amount would always be in proportion to the holding. The impost, indeed, might be called an

EQUALITY TAX;

for it would constantly equalize my whole common wealth, opportunities and advantages, among all my citizens. This equality tax would be chiefly paid by the rich, and would go chiefly to the poor, not in charity, but as their *unqualified right*. It would be my fund to guarantee the steady production of new wealth, and to compensate, in wages for honest work, the non-capitalist members of society, for any monopolies necessitated against them by the difference of ability among citizens to use wealth effectively.* Deduct this constant equality tax from all assets—thus withdrawing from individuals, in proportion to their wealth, the whole average interest of all the people in all property—then the assets themselves, however distributed, would constantly represent the exact value of the natural ability, industry and economy of the possessors. In other words, a man's property would then stand for the true wages of his labor, paid to him by the community,

IN THE SHAPE OF HIS PROPERTY ITSELF.

"The arrangement will raise a dreary howl among my heavy sharks and foxy tax-dodgers. They will say the distribution never can be made—into any pockets but their own—without "terrible corruption," and "danger to the Republic." But five or six hundred millions a year; that would be the surplus for redistribution at the start. It is only twice as much as one man, my enterprising Mr. Vanderbilt, left behind him the other day. If my boys can't manage to distribute that sum faithfully—with everybody's eye and vote on them at that—they ought to be turned out of office, and superseded by the girls. Toilson, that 'nostrum' is far-reaching. I will take a bottle, and renovate my system."

THE TRUE PRINCIPLE OF OWNERSHIP

shows how unnecessary would be a revolution—especially in America—for a new distribution of wealth. True, we have no end of thieves—individual and corporate—who have stolen from *each*

* This monopoly—the unequal distribution of wealth in proportion to the ability "to work it"—is strictly just, as the most "solid" lunkheads in the world claim so vigorously; and it is the *only just monopoly* that can possibly exist. But even this monopoly would not be just, if no way could be found to preserve it and at the same time to counteract it. In precisely this antithesis (a chip of Hegel at the bottom of political economy) lies the guarantee of the earth's pecuniary development in the largest degree.

other in such a way that only death and sheol can balance their accounts. But as far as rascals go who have *cheated the people*, the stolen goods are just as valuable *to tax* as any others. And the death-rate tax will instantly give to society *all it owns*, and all it *ought to have* in wealth, to-day or any other day, however that wealth may happen to be distributed.

There has been a special cry, of late, against land-monopoly. It has been greatly needed. Anything to open the new horizon! Anything for a start in the right direction! But the confiscation of rent, or the nationalization of land, directly or indirectly, in Ireland or anywhere else, is not only *wrong* but *inadequate*. This, it seems to me, I have demonstrated.

Again, it is unwise to be too much disturbed by the present concentration of wealth. It will simply be of no consequence who holds property, or how much is held by any person or combination, as soon as society comprehends and adopts

SCIENTIFIC TAXATION.

When the chief end of a State—next to yielding prize men and women—is to increase the production of wealth in the interest of all, without halt or stoppage; when labor is guaranteed to the “landless” as a full offset for capital; then labor will be just as good, to have and to hold, as land, or anything else. It will be just as much in demand as any other natural wealth; for *labor is*, in one sense, *natural wealth*, of the highest, most valuable kind. Now, we have Lassalle’s “iron law of wages”—the laborer reduced to a machine costing only the fuel and repairs to keep him running. But throw into the American market, directly and indirectly, as good, at the start, as a thousand millions of dollars a year, an increasing amount which *has got to be used up in employing the expropriated*—and which can be thrown against any unjust monopoly the people vote to kill—then what will become of the monopoly and “the iron law of wages?” History is a junk-shop full of just such traps.

I HAVE devoted the first part of this monograph to showing that what we artlessly call “civilization” is top-heavy with monopolies, and besotted with a new system of virtual slavery. But now I must insist that no one of our great monopolies—whether land, currency, tariff, or transportation—is much worse than another, and that all can be extinguished by a little

POPULAR INTELLIGENCE.

Suppose the people’s annual rent were put on vacant land—two per cent. of its full value, say at public auction. How long would land be cornered, and held on speculation?

Apply the death-rate tax to banks—to every dollar not a government issue. How piously the “hullion mongers,” as Thaddeus Stevens called them, would invoke the shade of that glorious greenback saint, to forgive their sins and lead them to salvation!

The tariff—well, there would be no tariff for *revenue*. The people’s annual tax would furnish the revenue, as direct taxation always ought to have furnished it, and as the founders of our government would have provided at first, if they had not been obliged to compromise with any number of Beelzebubs as well as chattel slavery. Whatever little end of a tariff might then be necessary, it would be solely for protection. The protection, too, would doubtless be real, not a swindle.

American railway stocks, as I have said, contain about four thousand millions of dollars in water. A good deal of it has been converted by the growth of the country into healthy blood, or *fat*. But, so far as it is still water, the death-rate tax would instantly let out that dropsy. The people, too, with their fund in hand, could build a few railways of their own, if desirable. Yet this very fact would render it unnecessary—would throw the old roads open to complete and impartial competition.

Once again, there would be no occasion to talk about eight hours for a day’s work, with

STRIKES, BLACK-LISTS, AND BOYCOTTING.

The whole business of society, being co-operative, would resolve itself into the production of just as much wealth as possible, *under healthful conditions for men, women and children*. And with just distribution, how could there ever be any overproduction of general wealth? President Cleveland’s Mr. Whitney, and his confederates of the Standard Oil Company, have a hundred millions or more, to spend on cabinet offices, seats in the Senate, and such fancy goods, because our foolish statutes permit them to make a little private tub of all God’s kerosene, and so fleece his whole people out of five or ten cents a gallon on it. If those sleek gentlemen don’t have too much property to suit them, under such a deal as that, is there any danger that the rest of us, with no aces and jacks up

our sleeves, will ever have too good a "brown-stone front," too much quail-on-toast, too many diamond ear-rings and seal-skin sacques. Overproduction be — blessed ! — prayerfully !

IT IS SAID that

SOCIALISM

is now making rapid progress both in Europe and America. Very likely. Socialists are the world's new enthusiasts. Their reform is a religion to them. And they are not dreamers. They have studied their epoch and know how sick it is. They think they have found the only cure. When even *American* socialism has produced a book like Lawrence Gronlund's "Co-operative Commonwealth," 'tis time to look around for arguments, not epithets, with which to meet the socialists. If socialism is wrong, let us confront it with the right thing. And it is wrong. Thomas Jefferson still stands for a good deal more wisdom than Karl Marx, though Karl Marx may be a good tonic for Jeffersonian Democracy.

In spite of all protests, provisos and explanations, it can't be dodged that socialism demands substantial, if not technical, equality of wealth—premissing, as it does, that the main vocations of life are about equally necessary, and should be about equally rewarded. No doubt the shoemaker is quite as useful as the doctor. But one shoemaker hitches a steam-engine to his bench ; another works with a broken awl. One doctor cures you ; another kills you. Should they all have—not exactly the same pay ? Socialism does *not* say that. But should they all have the same pay in proportion to the time and labor required to fit shoemakers and doctors for their work ? Socialism *does* say that. In the next breath it says : "Results according to deeds." But it can't get results according to deeds from such a theory, and virtually gives up the attempt.

The reason is plain. The corner-stone of socialism is the proposition that *value depends on labor*, and that average common labor is the *measure of all value*. This is true ; but the inference from it, that the only difference in the value of labor can be measured by the difference in time required to fit persons for one or another kind of work, is not only not logical and not true, but is utter nonsense. How much extra time, devoted to the average human creature, will measure the value of Parepa's voice, of Angelo's conception of St. Peter's, or even of Worth's taste in fixing frills on a pretty woman ? Yet all these little coruscations of genius and dressmaking are a part of human nature and of human wants. They have value—ordinary commercial value ; for human nature must be taken as it is, not as some professor thinks it ought to be. Socialism simply ignores about half, and the best half, of human labor—the labor of taste, of genius, of all natural superiority. It levels not to the base of things as they are, but below the base, to something they are not. It asserts not only that "all men are created equal"—in natural *rights*—but that all men are born with *gifts*, so nearly equal that the difference in both the gifts and their results is merely one of a little time and training.

Hence the deduction of socialism that society can establish the value of labor by fiat, instead of the law of supply and demand. For the plan is to reorganize society by a government grouping of all trades and vocations, as postal work is now grouped, and "distributing earnings according to deeds." But who is to decide on the value of the deeds ? W'y, the trades, the masses, the government, the State. Thus the socialistic scheme contemplates a monopoly of the dull many against the inspired few, just as the sharp, artful few now possess all sorts of monopolies against the sluggish masses.

Under its present organization, society is like a squint-eyed sneak-thief, who, by cunning legislation, uses taxation, tariffs, coin-pot currencies, transportation charters, stock corners, grain corners, hog corners, and every other hidden, cut-purse implement, to pick the pocket of honest, stupid industry. Under the methods of socialism, society would be a half-blind house-breaker, with a dim lantern, boldly helping himself to unappreciated and inestimable jewels, and throwing them into a natural pawn-shop, to get a cheap-John fiat on their value.

The truth is—the root of it—there are two kinds of nature's bounty. One is the earth outside of us ; the other is the quality, the capacity, inside of us. The outside bounty of nature is given to mankind in common and equally. The inside bounty of nature is given to *individuals, separately and unequally*. Now I insist that each belongs rigidly to *whom it was given*, and that the natural fruits of each go with it.

Nor do I forget the "unearned increments." Society largely makes the individual what he is ; and the moment he works up any part of the common wealth, and population spreads the use of it, that moment the people have all sorts of claims against him for

UNEARNED INCREMENTS.

But these all go over into the wealth he accumulates, and the death-rate tax will take them all out of him, all the time. just in proportion to the public right in his estate.

Thus the collection and redistribution of a people's natural rent will do, *automatically*, what socialism would try to do by arbitrary fumbling, and by loading the State with so much machinery that it would be like one of those redressive old knights of the middle ages who couldn't get up or walk in his armor. *

Comprehensively viewed, the tenures to property have grown up, through the ages, as naturally as accretions of coral. They represent the necessities, the common sense, and the common *consent* of ages and nations. And the most of these institutions are in themselves *right*. In our confusion, we don't yet see how to "evolute," as Mr. George Francis Train puts it—how to bring old substances into new forms. Private ownership, bequest and inheritance, money, rent, interest, are all perfectly well-founded in the very structural relations of man to matter. But

SOCIETY AS A WHOLE

is always the

SOVEREIGN LANDLORD AND CAPITALIST,

and owns a definite share of all wealth. This share is the

PEOPLE'S ABSOLUTE RIGHT.

I have pointed to the fact that every system of taxation, now existing, implies that society owns an interest in private property, and takes such property to pay public expenses. It takes, also, the LIVES of its citizens to protect the commonwealth. But the principle has never been analyzed and understood. The time has come to comprehend and apply it.

THE MASSES OF MANKIND

are now beginning to demand comfort for themselves and opportunity for their children, as the price of holding communities together and guarding their wealth. But the masses are always honest and slow. They only want to know what is justly due them, and how to get it with the least trouble. When they have the information, their vote can make the law of our great

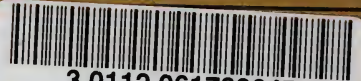
AMERICAN REPUBLIC,

and their example the

LAWS OF NATIONS.

* Of all the *wrong* things now before the world as economic remedies, the best, from the practical standpoint, is the "limitation of wealth" by the "graduated taxation," not of *incomes* (the worst kind of a tax), but of *estates*. This plan appears to be the offspring of Mr. John H. Keyser, a venerable gentleman of very large information and experience. The graduated taxation of estates, in proportion to their size, if carefully established, would do, approximately and by guess-work, what the death-rate tax would do by exact science. But "the limitation of wealth" is not, in itself, either just or desirable. The thing to do is to encourage every individual to accumulate, for himself, all the wealth he can, at the same time taking out of it, for society, exactly what belongs to society—the correct charge against every individual for the assistance and protection which society gives him.





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MR. CLARK'S BOOK, "Man's Birthright, or The Higher Law of Property" (Putnam's Sons) has elicited wide comment both in America and Europe. The substance of it has had the honor of translation in France by M. Godin, and has been reproduced also in German. A few comments on it are subjoined :

No one can deny that the problem which Mr. Clark has undertaken to solve is one deserving of the most careful consideration. Every day affords proof of the existence of a sentiment that the laws which govern the creation and distribution of wealth are not satisfactory.—*Boston Herald*.

In this book the author engages with spirit and clearness in a discussion of the question of property. His idea is a modernizing, by the taxation method, of the principle of the Hebrew Jubilee.—*Galveston News*.

Students of political economy will find this essay very interesting. It is written with conviction.—*New York Times*.

His exposition should be read by every student of those "burning questions" which are now engaging the attention of the great economists.—*The Current (Chicago)*.

Mr. Clark's book is a most important contribution towards a solution of the grave social questions that are calling loudly for settlement in England to-day, and must soon have a general bearing in this country.—*New York News*.

A remarkable little book has just been written by Mr. Edward Gordon Clark, which is one of the most interesting and novel contributions to economic literature that has appeared in this country.—*Albany Evening Journal*.

In regard to style—the packing and pointing of pure English—Mr. Clark was long ago pronounced a master by the giant-master, Wendell Phillips. "Such a weapon as this finished, full, terse, admirable style, so winning one cannot stop reading, no matter what the subject! I envy you!" Those are the words addressed by Wendell Phillips to the author of "Man's Birthright."—*John Swinton's Paper*.

Mr. Clark writes apparently with the greatest confidence that he has found a solution of the problem of the regulation and distribution of wealth, and without doubt there is force in his main propositions.—*The Index (Boston)*.

I am glad your book is coming, and wish it every success. If in anything you can show that I am in error I will accept the amendment.—*Henry George*.

Mr. Clark certainly manages to show pretty well on what a brittle staff of argument Henry George leans.—*New York Times*.

In the progress of the argument to sustain the position taken by "Man's Birthright," the reasoning of Mr. George's famous book is severely criticised, and in some instances—material ones, too—overturned. To those who are in accord with Mr. George's premises and at variance with the outcome of his work, "Man's Birthright" furnishes tenable ground to stand on.—*Justice (organ of the Anti-Monopolists, New York)*.

We believe that Henry George's theory is bad, and we thank the author of "Man's Birthright" for declaring it "simply a vast monopoly of the manufacturer and the wage-worker against the farmer."—*Winsted (Conn.) Press*.

Several years ago I read Henry George's book, and it came to me like a revelation. Its merit is in setting forth the social problem so as to be understood. I have felt that his remedy was defective, inadequate, and impracticable. I was thus prepared to appreciate your book, and I have been intensely interested in it. I believe your principle is the true one.—*Rev. Dr. K. C. Anderson*.

The book impresses me very strongly. It seems to me that it is the word that was needed to be said to clear the perplexity and obscurity of this subject. It seems to move of itself, like a proposition in Euclid.—*Rev. R. Heber Newton*.

Mr. Clark has attempted, in "Man's Birthright," to solve the problem of a more equitable distribution of property than now prevails. He describes with great force and eloquence the injustice of the present system. He is quite as brilliant and vigorous as Henry George, but his solution of the problem is different. While he does not believe that any one has a right to monopolize the forces of nature, he does not advocate land nationalization. While he believes that every one has a right to all land, he is not in favor of its acquisition by the government. He does not assail vested rights or preach communism. He would simply subject all property to what he calls a ground-rent, representing the claim that a generation has to all existing property.—*Rochester Democrat and Chronicle*.

The death-rate theory of taxation seems to be the only one that can satisfactorily solve the problems of political economy; and notwithstanding the array of illustrious names which have contributed to that science, we apprehend that none of their discoveries will ever rank in importance with the revelation afforded by this vigorous, lucid and concise statement of The Higher Law of Property.—*Troy Evening Standard*.